FOR YOUR FAMILY’S MENTAL HEALTH

Reaching Out for Support

INCLUDES:

- A spiritual leader’s advice for mental wellness
- Tips for getting mental health support from your community
- Fun games & activities for the whole family
Hi Alma!
How are you?
You seem down and I haven't seen you at service. Do you want to talk about anything?
No. I'm fine. I've just been really tired lately.
Hi Father.
I'm doing okay.
Thank you but I'll get over it soon.
FATHER VICTOR IS AT THE GROCERY STORE AND SEES ALMA.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES, GO TO www.TakeAction4MH.com.

The Take Action for Mental Health campaign is a project of the California Mental Health Services Authority (CaMHSA).
You know, Alma, it’s not good to keep all your feelings trapped inside. It’s important to talk about it.

With the children and the baby, it’s hard to find a second for myself, let alone talk with my husband.

I’m here to help if you change your mind. God wants you to be strong for your family - physically and mentally.

I believe that is true. Thank you, Father.

I’m glad you stopped by, Alma. Tell me what’s going on.

I’m overwhelmed. I’m always tired and feeling down. I don’t have motivation for anything. I thought I could get through this on my own, but I don’t think I can.

So many people love and care for you. We all want to see you get back to your up-beat self... and you will!

When?! I’m so frustrated that I can’t snap out of it. I just want to feel like myself again.

Get support for your mental health when you need it. Your trusted community members can help.

Back at home, Alma feels overwhelmed by everything that needs to be done and begins to recognize that she can’t face her problems alone.

Guilt, Fatigue, Sleep problems, Appetite changes, Feelings of sadness, Difficulty concentrating, Feeling worthless.
Have you considered talking with a therapist?

No, of course not. We all need someone to talk to from time to time.

Do you think I'm crazy?!

I'll have to think about this. I thought I could talk with you and my problems would go away.

I will still be here for your spiritual health but I do think it is wise to talk with a therapist to tend to your mental health.

My husband will think something is wrong with me.

I wouldn't know where to start.

I have a phone number for our local clinic; there are some good therapists that I trust. I have referred others to them in the past with great success.

My husband will think something is wrong with me.

Just as we go to the doctor when we feel physically sick, this is no different. It's about taking care of ourselves.

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Is God punishing me, Father?

No, Alma. God loves you and wants you to be healthy.

ALMA CALLS THE LOCAL CLINIC AND SPEAKS WITH A THERAPIST, WHO HELPS HER LEARN HOW TO MANAGE HER SYMPTOMS.
Why is mental health important?

Our mental health supports our thinking and feeling, our mood, our ability to relate to others and to function in daily life. Sometimes we experience mental health challenges that disrupt our mental health, which take the form of medical illnesses like depression, anxiety or eating disorders.

How common are mental illnesses?

Just like physical illnesses, mental illnesses are very common and nothing to be ashamed of. Research shows 1 in 5 Latino adults are living with a diagnosable mental illness in any given year. So, it’s almost certain that someone in your family needs your support.

Can mental illnesses be treated?

Yes. With appropriate support and treatment, people can improve their symptoms and live happy, full and productive lives.

Is there anything I can do to help if a friend or family member’s mental health is suffering?

Yes. Be supportive and encourage the person to see a doctor or counselor. Remind them that there is hope. Speak and act from a place of compassion and acceptance, rather than fear.

How can I support my family’s mental health?

To support mental health and prevent mental illness, pay attention to triggers like stress and warning signs such as trouble sleeping or mood swings. Get routine medical care, and seek mental health care when you need it. Finally, take good care of yourself: good sleep, healthy eating and regular physical activity are important to mental health and physical health.
Have a Check-In Chat!

Have a Check-In Chat!

In the story about Alma, she runs into her priest at the grocery store. He hasn’t seen her at services lately and has noticed she seems down. He takes the time to ask how she’s doing—and then to really listen. This is an example of a Check-In Chat.

A Check-In Chat is a great way to ask if someone needs some support for their mental health. And to let them know you care about them and are there if they need you.

The good news is that talking about mental health gets easier the more you do it.

Listen to what they have to say. Let them know you’re there to support them and that they are not alone. Check in with them again in the future to see how they are doing.

In Alma’s story, her priest starts a Check-In Chat, which uncovers some of Alma’s struggles. As a result, Alma sees a therapist, which helps both her and her family. While Check-In Chats may not always help right away, they show you are paying attention and that you care, which makes a difference.

If you want to check in with someone you care about but aren’t sure what to say, here are some ideas for how to start the conversation...

- How have you been feeling?
- Seems like something is bothering you. Do you want to talk about it?
- I haven’t seen you in a while. I miss you. What’s going on?
- I’m worried about you because...
- I care about you. How can I help?
- One of your recent social media posts left me feeling concerned... I want to make sure you are ok.

Everyone has times in life when they feel stressed, anxious, or sad. After a while, things may change and you’ll feel better. But if the feelings don’t go away, it’s time to get support for your mental health.

For many people, speaking with a therapist or other mental health professional is beneficial. It gives you the opportunity to explore your thoughts, feelings, and patterns of behaviors in a private and safe way. It can also help you learn new coping skills and techniques to better manage daily stressors or symptoms associated with your mental health. However, because you may need to wait for an appointment, go ahead and get it on the calendar now.

Peer support can help. In addition to, or while you’re waiting to get in with a professional, you can benefit from peer support. This might be in person or in an online group. Talking with people who have had problems like yours can help you feel like you’re not alone. They can give you ideas that worked for them or share helpful resources.

Whatever you decide to do, take action to get the support you need.
There are many ways to talk about feelings. Some are helpful, others are hurtful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HELPFUL</th>
<th>HURTFUL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use sentences that start with “I feel”</td>
<td>“You make me feel” or “Because of you”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make observations: “The dirty laundry is on the floor.”</td>
<td>Make judgments: “How did I raise such a messy child?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name your feelings, and be specific: “I feel frustrated when I see clothes on the floor.”</td>
<td>Make others responsible for your feelings: “It makes me so mad when you don’t pick up after yourself.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express your needs: “I have a need for the house to be tidy, and for everyone to help.”</td>
<td>Repress your needs: “No one cares about what I want anyway.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a request: “Would you be willing to pick up your clothes in the next five minutes?”</td>
<td>Make a demand: “Pick up your clothes or no dinner for you tonight!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talking about feelings is good for our health. It feels good to talk about feeling good and being happy. It may not be so easy to talk about feeling sad, hurt, lonely or stressed, but talking about these feelings is the first step to feeling better.

When we try to hide our feelings or keep them inside, they don’t go away. They get stronger and stronger over time. They start to take control over our words and actions, even when we don’t want them to. By trying to ignore our feelings, we actually give them more power. They can even make us sick! It’s better to let them out by talking about them with people we trust.

Everyone has feelings. Some of us try to hide them, but they are always here inside.

Feelings are always changing. Sometimes we are sad. Other times we are happy. Usually, a sad feeling will be replaced by a happy feeling in time.

Our feelings — and other people’s feelings — are true for each of us in this moment. Even if we feel good, we can still accept that our friend or family member might not feel good at the same time. We cannot force ourselves or others to feel a certain way.

If sad feelings stick around too long, we can turn to someone we trust for support. This may be a family member, a friend, a faith leader, a counselor or a doctor.

Here are ways to be helpful — not hurtful — when someone is sharing their feelings with us.

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<td>Listen with attentiveness</td>
<td>Interrupt or tell our own story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be respectful</td>
<td>Give advice or try to “fix” the feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show support and compassion</td>
<td>Criticize or blame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge feelings with “oh” or “I see”</td>
<td>Deny or ignore feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With young children, give a name to the feeling to help them understand it</td>
<td>Label feelings as bad, or tell a child they should not feel them</td>
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Information & Services

**Take Action for Mental Health**
www.TakeAction4MH.com

As part of California’s ongoing mental health movement, the Take Action for Mental Health campaign helps you check in, learn more, and get support for your own mental health or the mental health of someone who needs help. Start taking action with the information and tools at www.TakeAction4MH.com.

The site includes a directory of resources and support options available locally, including help lines, warm lines, and contact information for your nearest behavioral health services at www.TakeAction4MH.com/find-help-now.

**SAMHSA (Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration)**
National Helpline
www.SAMHSA.gov
1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Call SAMHSA’s National Helpline for 24/7, free, and confidential treatment referral and information services in English and Spanish for people and families facing mental and/or substance use issues.

If you or someone you know needs help, there are resources available to assist you.

**SAMHSA**

**National Helpline**
www.NationalHelpline.org
1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Call the National Helpline 24/7 for free and confidential support in English and Spanish.

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Call for 24/7, free, and confidential support in English and Spanish.

**Know the Signs**
www.SuicideIsPreventable.org
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

The Know the Signs campaign aims to help Californians recognize the warning signs of suicide and support a loved one by finding the words to ask directly about suicide and reaching out to resources.

**988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**
www.988lifeline.org
988 or 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Spanish: 1-888-628-9454

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

To search for more local services online, visit: www.TakeAction4MH.com/find-help-now

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**CalHOPE**
www.calhopeconnect.org

CalHOPE Connect live chat connects you with trained, supportive peers when you need to talk with someone.

To search for more local services online, visit: www.TakeAction4MH.com/find-help-now
MATCH the feelings with the face!

1. Angry
2. Sad
3. Happy
4. Silly
5. Tired
6. Worried
7. Surprised
8. Scared
9. Excited

Answers: 1) c  2) b  3) a  4) d  5) e  6) i  7) g  8) h  9) f
NAME THAT FEELING!
Cut out each word and put them all in a bag. Each family member will select one word from the bag and silently act out the feeling that word represents using body and facial expressions. Whoever names the correct feeling gets a point! Continue until all feelings are named and add up points to find the winner.

**FIND these words in the puzzle:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY FEELINGS</th>
<th>HEALTHY TALK</th>
<th>SMILE TALK</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRIEND HAPPY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

M N Z S W X I X P Z R U U C K
V A Y M N C W D Q Y K W P U C
I F R I E N D J P V T D C L P
S I J L P B E P K A B A O Q P
A X P E N L A Y I P U O L E Y
A B V E W H Y W B Q H R F K Q
Z F I A P F F Q A C E I A W G
X J E L M A D E S N J H M I Z
Z H B R J V J G E M B P I T N
D E A K I I M G K L G N L K Y
Z A T E S F V Y B S I G Y H U
M L D F A O N G R X H N B I C
X T J D D V H Y X I H A G F W
X H U I V A D P W N V M O S V
H Y A P W X F G R Q H M X F Y

**More Games!**

FAMILY FEELINGS: MAD, SAD, SCHOOL

FRIEND HAPPY

HEALTHY TALK

SMILE TALK

Angry

Happy

Excited

Frustrated

Disappointed

Nervous

Shy

Bored

Hopeful

Afraid

Sad

Jealous